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Mr. *Howard's*

ARTILLERY-ELECTION

SERMON,

JUNE 7th, 1773.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SERMON

PREACHED

TO THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE

Artillery-Company,

IN

BOSTON, NEW-ENGLAND,

JUNE 7th, 1773.

BEING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

BY

SIMEON HOWARD, A. M.

Paſtor of the Weſt CHURCH in *Boſton.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

Artillery-Election

SERMON.

GALATIANS V. 1.

Stand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free.

MANKIND are generally averſe to innovations both in religion and government. Laws and conſtitutions to which they have been long uſed, they are fond of retaining, even though better are offered in their ſtead. This appeared in the Jews. Their law required a burdenſome and expenſive

expenſive ſervice : chriſtianity ſet them free from this law. Nevertheleſs, many of them were deſirous of continuing the obſervation of it, after they became chriſtians ; and of having the gentile converts alſo ſubmit to it. Accordingly there were ſome Judaiſing teachers who endeavoured to perſuade the Galatians to this ſubmiſſion. The Apoſtle, therefore, in this epiſtle, particularly in the immediately foregoing chapter, aſſerts and proves, that chriſtians have nothing to do with the ceremonial law of the Jews, they being freed by Chriſt, from this burden. And then as an inference from what he had ſaid, and by way of admonition to the Galatians, he ſubjoins the exhortation in the text ; ſtand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free.

But though the words originally refer to that freedom from the Jewiſh law which the goſpel confers on the church of God ; yet the reaſon of the inference holds good in the caſe of any other real and valuable liberty which men have a right to : So that this obſervation is plainly deducible from the text ; viz. that it is the duty of all men to ſtand faſt in ſuch valuable liberty, as providence has confered upon them.

This obſervation I ſhall endeavour, by the help of God, to illuſtrate and improve : In order to which, I ſhall ſhew ;

I. WHAT I intend by that liberty in which men ought to ſtand faſt.

II. IN what way they ought to ſtand faſt in this liberty, or what they may and ought to do in defence of it.

III. THE obligations they are under to this duty.

After which, I ſhall ſubjoin ſome reflections, and apply the ſubject to the preſent occaſion.

I. I am to ſhew what is intended in this diſcourſe by the liberty in which men ought to ſtand faſt.

THOUGH this word is uſed in various ſenſes, I mean by it here, only that liberty which is oppoſed to external force and conſtraint, and to ſuch force and conſtraint only, as we may ſuffer from men. Under the term liberty, taken in this ſenſe, may naturally be comprehended all thoſe advantages which are liable to be deſtroyed by the art or power of men; every thing that is oppoſed to temporal ſlavery.

THIS liberty has always been accounted one of the greateſt natural bleſſings which mankind can enjoy. Accordingly, the benevolent and impartial Father of the human race, has given to all men a right, and to all naturally an equal right to this bleſſing. IN

In a ſtate of nature, or where men are under no civil government, God has given to every one liberty to purſue his own happineſs in whatever way, and by whatever means he pleaſes, without aſking the conſent or conſulting the inclination of any other man, provided he keeps within the bounds of the law of nature. Within theſe bounds, he may govern his actions, and diſpoſe of his property and perſon, as he thinks proper. * Nor has any man, or any number of men, a right to reſtrain him in the exerciſe of this liberty, or puniſh, or call him to account for uſing it. This however is not a ſtate of licentiouſneſs, for the law of nature which bounds this liberty, forbids all injuſtice and wickedneſs; allows no man to injure another in his perſon or property, or to deſtroy his own life.

But experience ſoon taught that, either thro' ignorance of this law, or the influence of unruly paſſions, ſome were diſpoſed to violate it, by encroaching upon the liberty of others; ſo that the *weak* were liable to be greatly injured by the ſuperior power of bad men, without any means of ſecurity or redreſs. This gave birth to civil ſociety, and induced a number of individuals to combine together for mutual defence and ſecurity; to give up a part of their natural liberty for the ſake of enjoying the remainder in greater ſafety; to agree upon certain laws among themſelves to regulate the ſocial conduct of each individual; or to intruſt to one or more of

* See Locke on government.

of their number, in whoſe wiſdom and goodneſs they could confide, a power of making ſuch laws, and putting them in execution.

In this ſtate, the liberty which men have is all that natural liberty which has been mentioned, excepting what they have *expreſsly* given up for the good of the whole ſociety; a liberty of purſuing their own happineſs, governing their actions, and diſpoſing of their property and perſons as they think fit, provided they tranſgeſs no law of nature, and keep within thoſe reſtrictions which they have conſented to come under.

This liberty will be different in different communities. In every ſtate, the members will, probably, give up ſo much of their natural liberty, as they think will be moſt for the good of the whole. But different ſtates will judge differently upon this point; ſome will give up more, ſome leſs, though ſtill with the ſame view, the publick good. And every ſociety have doubtleſs a right to act according to their own judgment and diſcretion in this matter, this being only an exerciſe of that natural liberty in which all are born.

When a ſociety commits to one or a few a power to govern them, the general practice is to limit this power by certain preſcribed rules and reſtrictions. But ſometimes this is omitted, and it does not appear from any act of the people, but that the power, with which they have intruſted their rulers, is unlimited. In this caſe

common ſenſe will tell us that the power granted to rulers is to be limited by the great end and deſign of ſociety and government: and he muſt be deſtitute of common ſenſe, who does not know that this is the general good, the happineſs and ſafety of the whole ſociety. So that though a people ſhould, through inadvertency, neglect to preſcribe any bounds to the power of their rulers, this power would nevertheleſs be limited, and *they* would be at liberty to refuſe ſubmiſſion to ſuch reſtraints or laws, as were plainly inconſiſtent with the publick good.

THERE are ſome natural liberties or rights which no perſon can diveſt himſelf of, without tranſgreſſing the law of nature. A man cannot, for inſtance, give up the liberty of private judgment in matters of religion, or convey to others a right to determine of what religion he ſhall be, and in what way he ſhall worſhip God. A grant of this nature would deſtroy the foundation of all religion in the man who made it, and muſt therefore be a violation of the law of nature; nor would he be obliged to abide by it, if in conſequence of it, he ſhould be required to act contrary to the dictates of his conſcience. Or ſhould a man pretend to grant to others a power to order and govern all his actions that were not of a religious nature, ſo that in all caſes he muſt act agreeable to their direction; this would be inconſiſtent with that ſubmiſſion which he owes to the authority of God, and his own conſcience. The grant would be in itſelf void, and he would, notwithſtanding, be at liberty to act according

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to his own conſcience, though contrary to the command of thoſe to whom he had made ſo extravagant a donation.

SHOULD therefore the legiſlature of a ſtate make laws requiring the ſubjects to do things immoral, and which they knew to be ſo, ſuch, for inſtance, as were apparently deſtructive of public happineſs, though it was in conſequence of an expreſs grant of unlimited power, the ſubjects would be at liberty to refuſe obedience, and not violate conſcience or deſtroy their own happineſs. * So that only ſuch laws of ſociety as are not plainly inconſiſtent with the end of ſociety, or, in any other reſpect, inconſiſtent with the law of nature, the eternal rules of morality, can reſtrain and limit the natural liberty of thoſe who belong to it.

IT is to be further obſerved here, that ſtates or communities, as ſuch, have naturally the ſame liberty which individuals have in the ſtate of nature: but this liberty is reſtrained, in ſome meaſure, by what are called the laws of nations, which are certain rules, that by a tacit conſent are agreed upon among all communities, at leaſt among thoſe who are accounted the polite and civilized part of mankind. *Theſe*, nations are not at liberty to violate. WHAT

* "All conveyance of abſolute power, whether to a "prince or a ſenate, with a preclusion of all rights of re-"ſiſtance, muſt be a deed originally invalid, as founded in "an error about what is moſt eſſential in ſuch tranſacti-"ons, the tendency of ſuch power to the general good." Dr. Hutcheſon's ſyſtem of moral philoſophy, Vol. 2. Page 271.

WHAT has been ſaid may be ſufficient to ſhew what that liberty is in which men ought to ſtand faſt. In a ſtate of nature it is all that liberty which is conſiſtent with the law of nature; under civil government, it is all which is conſiſtent with the law of nature, and with ſuch reſtrictions as they have conſented to come under conſiſtently with the law of nature and the end of ſociety: and when we conſider one independent ſtate in reference to another, it is all that natural liberty which is conſiſtent with the laws of nations.

AND whatever ſhare men enjoy of this liberty, we may properly ſay in the words of the text, that Chriſt has made them free with it; ſince after his reſurrection and exaltation to the right hand of theMajeſty on high, all power in heaven and in earth was committed to him, and he now ſits, and is to continue at the head of God's providential government, till he hath put all enemies under his feet; after which, he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father—that God may be all in all.

II. I am in the next place to ſhew in what way men are to ſtand faſt in their liberty, or what they may and ought to do in defence of it.

IT is here ſuppoſed that ſome attempts are made to injure it. And it has been found in all ages and places that ſuch attempts have been made by unreaſonable and wicked men. The hiſtory of mankind is filled with inſtances

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of this; inſomuch that if from the great number of hiſtorical books that have been written, we ſhould leave out thoſe parts that relate to their encroachments upon one another, their injuries and injuſtice, moſt of thoſe huge volumes would ſhrink to a very ſmall ſize. Cain began this practice very ſoon after the creation: and it has been continued ever ſince, both among kingdoms and individuals. And the ſame practice is ſtill to be expected, while human nature continues what it is.

Now for men to ſtand faſt in their liberty means, in general, reſiſting the attempts that are made againſt it, in the beſt and moſt effectual manner they can.

When any one's liberty is attacked or threatened, he is firſt to try gentle methods for his ſafety; to reaſon with, and perſuade the adverſary to deſiſt, if there be opportunity for it; or get out of his way, if he can; and if by ſuch means he can prevent the injury, he is to uſe no other.

But the experience of all ages has ſhewn, that thoſe, who are ſo unreaſonable as to form deſigns of injuring others, are ſeldom to be diverted from their purpoſe by argument and perſuaſion alone: Notwithſtanding all that can be ſaid to ſhew the injuſtice and inhumanity of their attempt, they perſiſt in it, till they have gratified the unruly paſſion which ſet them to work. And in this caſe, what is to be done by the ſufferer? Is he

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to uſe no other means for his ſafety, but remonſtrance or flight, when theſe will not ſecure him? Is he patiently to take the injury and ſuffer himſelf to be robbed of his liberty or his life, if the adverſary ſees fit to take it? Nature certainly forbids this tame ſubmiſſion, and loudly calls to a more vigorous defence. Self-preſervation is one of the ſtrongeſt, and a univerſal principle of the human mind: And this principle allows of every thing neceſſary to ſelf-defence, oppoſing force to force, and violence to violence. This is ſo univerſally allowed that I need not attempt to prove it.

But ſince it has been ſuppoſed by ſome that chriſtianity forbids all violent reſiſting of evil, or defending ourſelves againſt injurjes in ſuch a manner as will hurt, or endanger thoſe who attack us; it may not be amiſs to enquire briefly, whether defenſive war be not allowed by the goſpel of Chriſt, the Prince of peace.

And there are, if I miſtake not, ſeveral paſages in the new teſtament, which ſhew, that, it was not the deſign of this divine inſtitution to take away from mankind the natural right of defending their liberty, even by the ſword.

I will not alledge the words of John the baptiſt when in anſwer to the demand which the ſoldiers made; *What ſhall we do?—he ſaid unto them, do violence to no man, neither accuſe any falſely, and be content with your wages.* * For though

* Luke 3. 14.

though they plainly imply, that, at that time, the military profeſſion was not unlawful, and, conſequently, that men might uſe the ſword when there was occaſion for it: yet it does not follow from hence, that the religion which Jeſus was to inſtitute, would allow of that profeſſion and the uſe of the ſword.

But there are other paſſages proper to be here alledged.

The firſt that I ſhall mention is our Lord's own words to Pilate, when under examination before that Governor. The chief charge bro't againſt Jeſus was, that he was going to ſet up a temporal kingdom inconſiſtent with the ſovereignty of the Roman Emperor. In anſwer to which he declared, that his *kingdom was not of this world*; and then offered the following argument to prove the aſſertion: *If my kingdom were of this world, then would my ſervants fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews: But now is my kingdom not from hence.* † There is an ellipſis in the latter clauſe; but the ſenſe of the whole is obviouſly what follows. You know that thoſe who aim at temporal dominion, endeavour to eſtabliſh their authority and defend themſelves, by force of arms, when it is neceſſary: If this had been my aim I ſhould have taken the ſame method, and ordered my ſervants to fight againſt the Jews when they came to apprehend me: Wherefore, ſince I have made no violent reſiſtance; but, on the contrary, "hindred

† John 18. 36.

red one of my diſciples from fighting who ſought to reſcue me," it muſt now be evident to you, that the kingdom which I claim is not of this world. Our Lord here, plainly allows that it is fit and proper for temporal kingdoms to fight in defence of their liberty. His own kingdom is not, indeed, to be defended in this way, which being wholly ſpiritual, conſiſting in the obedience of men's wills and affections to the laws of God, is incapable of being directly either injured or defended by the ſword, as the kingdoms of this world, and men's temporal intereſt may.

CORNELIUS, a centurion of the Italian band, was directed by an angel of God to ſend for Peter, who ſhould tell him " what he ought to do." ¶ But we do not find that the apoſtle directed him to quit his military profeſſion, or intimated that it was inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of chriſtianity; which he certainly would have done, had the character of a ſoldier and a good chriſtian been incompatible.

THE apoſtle Paul exhorts the Romans thus: *If it be poſſible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* † Which words plainly imply, that notwithſtanding all their endeavours to preſerve peace, it might be impoſſible for them to live peaceably with all men, or not to contend and be at ſtrife with ſome; i. e. impoſſible in a moral ſenſe, improper, unlawful; for they do not require us to do all which we have a natural power to do, for the ſake of peace, but only

¶ Acts. 10. † Chap. 12. 18.

ly all that we can do conſiſtently with higher obligations, with our duty in other reſpects.

ONCE more—let me obſerve, that in the apocalypſe of St. John, where we have a prophetic account of the future ſtate of the church on earth, till the conſummation of all things, there are ſeveral paſſages which intimate, that the ſaints of the MoſtHigh, will fight in their defence againſt their enemies; and that though they ſhall in various inſtances be overcome, yet that they ſhall at length, by an amazing ſlaughter of their perſecutors, obtain for themſelves the peaceable enjoyment of that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free. ¶ Now it cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed that the ſpirit of God would have repreſented his faithful ſervants, as thus fighting againſt their enemies, and being ſo favoured by divine providence, as finally to prevail over them, if defenſive war was inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of the goſpel.

IT is not, however, to be denied that there are ſome paſſages in the new teſtament which ſeem to forbid all war: particularly, ourSaviour's own words in his ſermon on the mount. ‡ *I ſay unto you that ye reſiſt not evil—love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, &c.* And thoſe of the apoſtle Paul; *Recompence to no man evil for evil.—Avenge not yourſelves:* and ſome others of

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¶ Chap. XI. ver. 7. XIII. 7. XIV. 19, 20. XVII. 14. XIX. 14—21.

‡ Matthew 5. Romans 12. 17, 19.

the like import. And from ſuch paſſages ſome have ſuppoſed that chriſtians are not allowed to defend themſelves by force of arms, how violently ſoever they may be attacked.

GIVE me leave then, to offer a few remarks to take off the force of this objection.

1. WHEN our Saviour forbids us to reſiſt evil, he ſeems to have had in view only ſmall injuries, for ſuch are thoſe which he mentions in the following words, as an illuſtration of the precept; ſmiting on the cheek, taking away one's coat, or compelling him to go a mile. And to ſuch injuries it is oftentimes a point of prudence, as well as duty to ſubmit, rather than contend. But it does not follow, that becauſe we are forbidden to reſiſt ſuch ſlight attacks, we may not defend ourſelves when the aſſault is of a capital kind. But,

2. SUPPOSING our Lord's words to refer only to ſmall injuries, they ought not to be taken in an abſolute ſenſe. Expreſſions of this nature frequently occur in ſcripture, which are univerſally underſtood with certain reſtrictions and limitations. For inſtance; *Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world.* § *Lay not up for yourſelves treaſure on earth.* ‖ *Give to him that aſketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.* ¶ Now, I believe, no body ever ſuppoſed, not even the honeſt *Quakers*, that theſe precepts were to be underſtood ſo literally, as to forbid all love of the world,

§ 1 John 2. 5. ‖ Mat. 6. 19. ¶ Mat. 5. 42.

world, and all care to provide the good things of it; or to oblige us "to give to every idle fellow all he may think fit to aſk, whether in charity or loan." And we have as good a right to limit the precept which forbids our reſiſting evil, by the nature and reaſon of things, as we have to limit theſe other indefinite expreſſions.

3. DEFENDING ourſelves by force of arms againſt injurious attacks, is a quite different thing from rendering evil for evil. The latter implies doing hurt to another, becauſe he has done hurt to us; the former implies doing hurt to another, if he is hurt in the conflict, only becauſe there is no other way of avoiding the miſchief he endeavours to do us: the *one* proceeds from malice and revenge; the *other* merely from ſelf-love, and a juſt concern for our own happineſs, and argues no ill will againſt any man.

And therefore it is to be obſerved,

4. THAT neceſſary ſelf-defence, however fatal it may prove to thoſe who unjuſtly attack us, implies no principle inconſiſtent with that love to our enemies which Chriſt enjoins. For, at the ſame time that we are defending ourſelves againſt their aſſaults, we may bear good-will towards them, wiſh them well, and pray God to befriend them: All which we doubtleſs ought to do in reſpect of our bittereſt enemies.

ENOUGH has been ſaid to ſhew the conſiſtency of war with the ſpirit of the goſpel.

BUT it is only defenſive war that can be juſtified in the ſight of God. When no injury is offered us, we have no right to moleſt others. And chriſtian meekneſs, patience and forbearance, are duties that ought to be practiſed both by kingdoms and individuals. Small injuries, that are not likely to be attended with any very pernicious conſequences, are rather to be ſubmitted to, than reſiſted by the ſword. Both religion and humanity ſtrongly forbid the bloody deeds of war, unleſs they are neceſſary. Even when the injury offered is great in itſelf, or big with fatal conſequences, we ſhould, if there be opportunity, endeavour to prevent it by remonſtrance, or by offering to leave the matter in diſpute to indifferent judges, if they can be had. If theſe endeavours are unſucceſsful, it then becomes proper, to uſe more forceable means of reſiſtance.

A PEOPLE may err by too long neglecting ſuch means, and ſhamefully ſuffer the ſword to ruſt in its ſcabberd, when it ought to be employed in defending their liberty. The moſt graſping and oppreſſive power will commonly let its neighbours remain in peace, if they will ſubmit to its unjuſt demands. And an incautious peole may ſubmit to theſe demands, one after another, till its liberty is irrecoverably gone, before they ſaw the danger. Injuries ſmall in themſelves, may in their conſequences be fatal to thoſe who ſubmit to them; eſpecially if they are perſiſted in. And, with reſpect to ſuch injuries, we ſhould ever act upon that ancient maxim of prudence; *obſta principiis.* The firſt unjuſt

juſt demands of an encroaching power ſhould be firmly withſtood, when there appears a diſpoſition to repeat and encreaſe ſuch demands. And oftentimes it may be both the right and duty of a people to engage in war, rather than give up to the *demands* of ſuch a power, what they could, without any incoveniency, ſpare in the way of charity. War, though a great evil, is ever preferable to ſuch conceſſions, as are likely to be fatal to public liberty. And when ſuch conceſſions are required and inſiſted upon, as the conditions of peace, the only conſideration to be attended to by the abuſed ſtate, is that which our Saviour intimates common prudence will always ſuggeſt in ſuch caſes: *What king going to make war againſt another king, ſitteth not down firſt and conſulteth whether he be able*, &c. *

An innocent people threatened with war are not always obliged to receive the firſt attack.—This may frequently prove fatal, or occaſion an irreparable damage. When others have ſufficiently manifeſted an injurious or hoſtile intention, and perſiſt in it, notwithſtanding all the admonition and remonſtrance we can make, we may, in order to avoid the blow they are meditating againſt us, begin the aſſault.

After a people have been forced into a war for their own ſecurity, they ought to ſet reaſonable bounds to their reſentment, or they may become as guilty as the firſt aggreſſors. They ſhould aim at nothing more than repelling the injury,

* Luke 14. 31.

injury, obtaining reparation for damages ſuſtained, and ſecurity againſt future injuries. If, after theſe ends are obtained, they continue the war, in order to diſtreſs their enemies, or reduce them under their power, they become offenders, and the war on their ſide is unjuſt.

SUBMITTING the foregoing general obſervations to your candor, I go on to hint at ſome things proper to be attended to, by every people, in order to their being in a capacity to defend themſelves againſt encroachments on their liberty.

1. THEY ſhould endeavor to be united and at peace among themſelves. The ſtrength of a ſociety, as well as its honour and happineſs, depends much upon its union. OurSaviour's maxim is founded in reaſon, and has been confirmed by the experience of all ages : *Every kingdom divided againſt itſelf is brought to deſolation.* When the body politic is divided into parties, and the members make a buſineſs of oppoſing each other, it is in a fair way to ruin. They are not likely to unite in meaſures of defence againſt a common enemy, and will therefore lie open to the encroachments of violence and oppreſſion, and become an eaſy prey to every invader. The tyrants of the earth, ſenſible of this, have commonly acted upon this maxim, *divide et impera* : let us firſt divide the people, whom we mean to enſlave, into parties, and we ſhall then eaſily bring them under our power.

2. THEY

2. THEY ſhould endeavor to maintain among themſelves a general diſpoſition to ſubmit to government. Society cannot ſubſiſt without government; and there can be no government without laws, and a ſubmiſſion to laws. If a licentious ſpirit prevails among a people, a general diſpoſition to trample upon laws and deſpiſe government, they will probably make but a poor figure in defending themſelves againſt a common enemy; for, in making this defence, there muſt be leaders and followers, ſome to command and ſome to obey: And, other things being equal, the more a diſpoſition to ſubmit to rule and order prevails among a people, the more likely will they be to defend their liberty againſt foreign invaſions. Indeed without any enemy from abroad, the general prevalence of a licentious ſpirit may as effectually deſtroy the liberty of a people, as the moſt deſpotic government; for civil "liberty is ſomething as really different from that licentiouſneſs which ſuppoſeth no government, as from that ſlavery which ſuppoſeth tyranny: it is a freedom reſtrained by beneficial laws, and living and dying with public happineſs." *

3. THAT people that would be in a capacity to defend themſelves ſucceſsfully againſt encroachments, ſhould take care that their internal government be free and eaſy; allowing all that liberty to every one which is conſiſtent with the neceſſary reſtraints of government; laying no burdens upon any, but what are for the good of the whole, and to which the whole ſociety has

* Bp. Hoadly.

actually

actually or virtually conſented. Though the contrary evil takes its riſe from the weakneſs or wickedneſs of rulers, yet in every free ſtate it is the right and duty of all, *ſubjects* as well as rulers, to uſe their influence againſt it: And where the ſubjects have no *conſtitutional* right to do any thing to prevent or remove ſuch an evil, they are already ſlaves, and it may be tho't improper to talk of their defending their liberty; though they ought, doubtleſs, to endeavor to recover it. However, I ſay, it is highly neceſſary that this freedom from unreaſonable reſtraints be preſerved, in order to a people's retaining a ſpirit of liberty, and being in a capacity to defend themſelves againſt a common enemy. It is juſtly obſerved by that great ſtateſman, lord Verulam, that "the bleſſing of Judah and Iſſachar will never meet, that the ſame people or nation ſhould be both the lion's whelp, and the aſs between two burdens: neither will it be, that a people overlaid with taxes, ſhould ever become valiant and martial."* The laying unreaſonable burdens and reſtraints upon a people, will, if they are ſubmitted to, debaſe their minds, break their ſpirits, enervate their courage, and ſink them into cowards: if they are not ſubmitted to, the conſequence will be internal tumult, diſorder, ſtrife and contempt of government; and in either caſe, the defenſive power of the ſtate is greatly diminiſhed. Behold, then the policy, or rather the madneſs and folly of oppreſſive rulers: if they are ſucceſsful in their injurious meaſures, they are expoſing themſelves and their ſubjects an

* Bacon's Eſſays, p. 113.

an helpleſs prey to the ravages of ſome ambitious neighbour: if they are not; they are raiſing up enemies againſt themſelves at home, and, as it were, ſetting fire to their own habitations.

4 A PEOPLE who would ſtand faſt in their liberty, ſhould furniſh themſelves with weapons proper for their defence, and learn the uſe of them.

IT is indeed an hard caſe, that thoſe who are happy in the bleſſings of providence, and diſpoſed to live peaceably with all men, ſhould be obliged to keep up the idea of blood and ſlaughter, and expend their time and treaſure to acquire the arts and inſtruments of death. But this is a neceſſity which the depravity of human nature has laid upon every ſtate. Nor was there ever a people that continued, for any conſiderable time, in the enjoyment of liberty, who were not in a capacity to defend themſelves againſt invaders, unleſs they were too poor and inconſiderable to tempt an enemy.

So much depends upon the military art, in the preſent day, that no people can reaſonably expect to defend themſelves ſucceſsfully without it. However numerous they may be, if they are unſkilled in arms, their number will tend little more to their ſecurity, than that of a flock of ſheep does to preſerve them from the depredations of the wolf: accordingly it is looked upon as a point of wiſdom, in every ſtate, to be

be furniſhed with this ſkill, though it is not to be obtained without great labor and expence.

In ſome nations the method has been to truſt for defence and ſecurity to what is called a STANDING ARMY; a number of men paid by the public, to devote themſelves wholly to the military profeſſion; while the body of the people followed their peaceable employments, without paying any attention to the art of war.

But this has ever been thought, by the wiſe and prudent, a precarious defence.

Such armies are, as to the greater part of them, generally compoſed of men who have no real eſtate in the dominions which they are to defend; their pay is their living, and the main thing that attaches them to their employers; their manner of life tends to corrupt their morals, and, though they are naturally of the ſame temper with other men, they ſeldom continue long in this profeſſion, before they become diſtinguiſhed by their vices: So that neither their temporal intereſt, nor their regard to virtue can be ſuppoſed to attach them ſo ſtrongly to the country that employs them, but that there will always be danger of their being tempted by the promiſe of larger pay to betray their truſt, and turn their arms againſt it. No people therefore, can with ſafety truſt intirely to a ſtanding army, even for defence againſt foreign enemies.

But without any ſuch enemy, a ſtanding army may be fatal to the happineſs and liberty of

of a community. *They* generally propagate corruption and vice where they reſide, they frequently inſult and abuſe the unarmed and defenceleſs people: When there is any difference between rulers and ſubjects, they will generally be on the ſide of the former, and ready to aſſiſt them in oppreſſing and enſlaving the latter. For though they are really ſervants of the people, and paid by them; yet this is not commonly done in their name; but in the name of the ſupreme magiſtrate. The KING'S BREAD, and the KING'S SERVICE, are familiar expreſſions among ſoldiers, and tend to make them conſider him as their only maſter, and prefer his perſonal intereſt to that of the people. So that an army may be the means, in the hands of a wicked and oppreſſive ſovereign, of overturning the conſtitution of a country, and eſtabliſhing the moſt intolerable deſpotiſm. * It would be eaſy to ſhew from hiſtory, that this meaſure has been fatal to the liberties of many nations. And indeed, it has ſeldom been approved by the body of a people.

BUT rulers of an arbitrary diſpoſition, have ever endeavored to have a ſtanding army at their command, under a pretence indeed, of being for the ſafety of the ſtate, though really with a view of

* "What are we to expect, if in a future age an ambitious Prince ſhould ariſe, with a diſſolute and debauched army, a *flattering Clergy*, a proſtitute Miniſtry, a bankrupt houſe of L---d's, a penſioned houſe of C-----ns, and a ſlaviſh and corrupted nation?"

Trenchard's hiſtory of ſtanding armies in England.

of giving efficacy to their orders. It has ſometime been pretended, that this is neceſſary to aid and ſupport civil government. But whoever conſiders, that the deſign of government is the good of the people, and the great improbability there is, that a people, in general, ſhould be againſt meaſures calculated for their good, and that *ſuch* meaſures only ought to be enforced, will look upon this as the idleſt pretence. For rulers to uſe a military power, to enforce meaſures of a contrary tendency, is one of the wickedeſt and moſt unjuſtifiable kinds of offenſive war; a violation not only of the common laws of juſtice and humanity, but of their own ſacred engagements to promote the public good. The keeping up troops ſufficient to guard expoſed frontier poſts, may be proper; but to have an army continually ſtationed in the midſt of a people, in time of peace, is a precarious and dangerous method of ſecurity.

A ſafer way, and which has always been eſteemed the wiſeſt and beſt, by impartial men, is to have the power of defence in the body of the people, to have a well-regulated and well-diſciplined militia. ¶ This is placing the ſword in hands that will not be likely to betray their truſt, and who will have the ſtrongeſt motives to act their part well, in defence of their country, whenever they ſhall be called for. An army compoſed of men of property, who have been all their days inured to labour, will generally equal

¶ Our trained bands are the truſtieſt and moſt proper ſtrength of a free nation. MILTON's Eikon.

qual the beſt veteran troops, in point of ſtrength of body and firmneſs of mind, and when fighting in defence of their religion, their eſtates, their liberty, and families, will have ſtronger motives to exert themſelves, and may, if they have been properly diſciplined, be not much inferior to them in the ſkill of arms.

It was by a militia, by an army compoſed of men of property and worth of their own nation, that ancient Rome roſe to be miſtreſs of the world. The battles of *Agincourt*, *Poictiers* and *Creſſy* are memorable proofs of the martial proweſs of the ancient militia of England. Our own country will alſo furniſh us with many inſtances of the bravery of a militia, both formerly and latterly.

Caution however ought to be uſed in conſtituting a militia, that it may anſwer the end for which it is deſigned, and not be liable to be made an inſtrument of tyranny and oppreſſion. It ſhould be ſubject to diſcipline and order, and ſomewhere in the ſtate ſhould be lodged a power of calling it forth to action, whenever the ſafety of the people requires it. But this power ſhould be ſo limited and reſtrained, as that it cannot call it unneceſſarily, or oblige it to commit violence or oppreſſion upon any of the ſubjects. ¶

5. Once

¶ That wiſe men have thought a people might be in danger from their own militia, unleſs great caution was uſed in the direction of it, appears from the following quotation: "Take away from the king the abſolute power to compel men to take up arms, otherwiſe than in caſe

"of

5. ONCE more, it is neceſſary for a people who would preſerve their liberty, to maintain the general practice of religion and virtue. This will tend to make them courageous: The trueſt fortitude is ever to be found where the paſſions and affections are in ſubjection to the laws of God. Religion conciliates the favor of God, upon whom ſucceſs in war eſſentially depends; and the hope of this favour will naturally inſpire a brave and undaunted reſolution. Not to mention that the unity, riches, and bodily ſtrength of a people are greatly favoured by virtue. On the other hand; vice naturally makes men timerous, and fills the breaſt with baſeneſs and cowardiſe. What is here ſaid is agreable to the obſervation of that wiſe King and inſpired writer, who tells us, "*the wicked flee, when no man purſueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion.*

III. LET me now offer a few conſiderations to ſhew the obligations men are under to defend that liberty which providence has conferred upon them.

THIS is a truſt committed to us by heaven: we are accountable for the uſe we make of it, and

" of foreign invaſion; power to compel men to go out of
" their counties to war; to charge men for the main-
" tenance of wars; power to make them find arms at his
" pleaſure; and laſtly power to break the peace, or do
" ought that may tend thereto; certainly the power of the
" militia that remaineth, though never ſo ſurely ſettled in
" the king's hand, can never *bite* this nation.

Bacon on government. lib. 2. chap. 22.

and ought therefore, to the beſt of our power to defend it. The ſervant, who hid his talent in a napkin, is condemned in our Lord's parable; and he who through inattention, indolence or cowardiſe, ſuffers it to be wreſted from him, is little leſs criminal. Should a perſon, for inſtance, whoſe ability and circumſtances enable him to do good in the world, to relieve his diſtreſſed brethren, and be an example of charity and other virtues, tamely yield up all his intereſt and become an abſolute ſlave to ſome unjuſt and wicked oppreſſor, when he might by a manly reſiſtance have ſecured his liberty, would he not be guilty of great unfaithfulneſs to God, and juſtly liable to his condemnation? This would in its conſequences be really worſe than hiding his talent in a napkin; it would be not only not improving it for the glory of the giver, but conveying it into hands which will, in all probability, employ it greatly to his diſhonour. This reaſoning is as applicable to a community as to an individual. A kingdom or common wealth, as ſuch, is accountable for the improvement it makes of it's advantages: It is bound to preſerve them, and employ them for the honour of God; ſo far as it can, to be an example of virtue to neighbouring communities, and afford them relief when they are in diſtreſs: but by yielding up their poſſeſſions and liberties to an encroaching oppreſſive power, they become, in a great meaſure, incapable of theſe duties, and are liable to be made the miniſters of ſin through the compulſion of their maſters. Out of faithfulneſs then, to God, and in order to eſcape the doom

doom of ſlothful ſervants, we ſhould endeavour to defend our rights and liberties.

MEN are bound to preſerve their own lives, as long as they can, conſiſtently with their duty in other reſpects. Would not he, who ſhould loſe his life by neglecting to reſiſt a wild beaſt, be criminal in the ſight of God? And can he be innocent who loſes it by neglecting to oppoſe the violent attacks of wicked men, oftentimes as fierce and cruel as the moſt ſavage beaſt?

MEN are alſo bound, individuals and ſocieties, to take care of their temporal happineſs, and do all they lawfully can, to promote it. But what can be more inconſiſtent with this duty, than ſubmitting to great encroachments upon our liberty? Such ſubmiſſion tends to ſlavery; and compleat ſlavery implies every evil that the malice of man and devils can inflict. Again,

THE regard which we owe to the happineſs of others makes this a duty.

EVERY man is bound both by the law of nature and revelation, to provide in the beſt manner he can, for the temporal happineſs of his family; and he that neglects this, has, according to the declaration of an inſpired apoſtle, *denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* But in what way can a man be more juſtly chargeable with this neglect, than by ſuffering himſelf

to

to be deprived of his life, liberty or property, when he might lawfully have preſerved them?

REASON, humanity and religion, all conſpire to teach us, that we ought in the beſt manner we can, to provide for the happineſs of poſterity. We are allied to them by the common tie of nature: They are not here to act their part: A concern for them is a debt which we owe for the care which our progenitors took for us: Heaven has made us their guardians, and intruſted to our care their liberty, honour, and happineſs: For when they come upon the ſtage, they will be deeply affected by the tranſactions of their fathers, eſpecially by their public tranſactions. If the preſent inhabitants of a country ſubmit to ſlavery, ſlavery is the inheritance which they will leave to their children. And who that has the bowels of a father, or even the common feelings of humanity, can think without horror, of being the means of ſubjecting unborn millions to the iron ſcepter of tyranny?

BUT further; a regard to the happineſs of mankind in general, makes it a duty to reſiſt great injuries. Yielding to the unjuſt demands of bad men, not only leſſens our power of doing good, but encourages them to repeat their injuries, and ſtrengthens their hands to do miſchief: It enables them to give fuller ſcope to their luſts, and more effectually to ſpread corruption, diſtreſs and miſery. It is therefore an act of benevolence to oppoſe and deſtroy that power which is employed in injuring others;

and as much, when it is that of a tyrant, as of a wild beaſt.

ONCE more; from a regard to religion men are obliged to defend their liberty againſt encroachments, though the attack ſhould not immediately affect religion. Slavery expoſes to many temptations to vice, and by debaſing and weakening the mind, deſtroying its fortitude and magnimity renders it leſs capable of reſiſting them, and creates a dependance upon, and ſubjection to wicked men, highly prejudicial to virtue. Hence it has been often obſerved, and is confirmed by experience, that the loſs of liberty is ſoon followed by the loſs of all virtue and religon. ¶

BESIDES; the deſtruction of civil liberty is generally fatal to *religious*. The latter has ſeldom exiſted long in any place without the former. Nor is it to be expected that thoſe who are wicked enough to deprive a people of *that*, ſhould, when they have got them under their power, ſuffer them long to enjoy *this*; eſpecially as tyranny has generally made theſe two evils ſubſervient to each other.

BUT I may not enlarge: The conſiderations which have been ſuggeſted ſhew, if I miſtake not, that it is not only the right but the duty of men

¶ "The conquer'd alſo, and enſlav'd by war
"Shall with their freedom loſt all virtue loſe
And fear of God.

Paradiſe Loſt.

men to defend that liberty, with which providence has made them free: And a duty of high obligation, as the neglect of it may be attended with conſequences, the moſt prejudicial to human virtue and happineſs, and greatly diſhonorary to God.

ALL that now remains is to offer ſome reflections, and apply the ſubject to the preſent occaſion.

1. WHAT has been ſaid may ſerve to caution all againſt invading the liberty of others: —— Whoever does this, obliges others to reſiſt him: he puts himſelf into a ſtate of war with them, and is juſtly liable to all the evil which their neceſſary ſelf-defence may bring upon him. And though he may think that his power is ſo great, and their's ſo little, that he can be in no danger from their reſentment, the event may convince him of his miſtake. Men, who have a juſt ſenſe and value of liberty, will ſometimes do wonders in its defence.

—— — "They have great odds
Againſt the aſtoniſh'd ſons of violence,
Who fight with awful juſtice on their ſide." ‡

OPPRESSORS may indeed for a time, be ſucceſsful and overcome all oppoſition; yet it ſeldom happens that they perſevere in their injurious practice, without meeting with ſuch reſiſtance as cauſes their *miſchief to return upon their own heads, and their violent dealings to come down upon their own pates:*

‡ Thomſon.

pates: It is an old obſervation, that few tyrants deſcend in peace to the grave. If therefore, the laws of God will not, a regard to their own ſafety, ſhould reſtrain men from invading the rights of the innocent.

2. If it be ſo important a duty for men to reſiſt encroachments upon their liberty; then it cannot be improper for the chriſtian miniſter, to inculcate *this* upon his hearers; to exhort them to be watchful over it, and ready to oppoſe all attempts againſt it. This is ſo far from being improper, that it is, I humbly conceive, his indiſpenſible duty. Nor can I ſee how he could anſwer it to God, or his own conſcience, if, when he thought his country was in danger of being enſlaved, for want of a proper ſenſe of, and oppoſition to the approaches of tyranny, he ſhould neglect to point out the danger, and with

—— —— — "honeſt zeal
To rouſe the watchmen of the public weal." †

It is readily owned, that *deſignedly* to ſpread falſe alarms, to fill the minds of people with groundleſs prejudices againſt their rulers, or a neighbouring ſtate, to ſtir up faction and encourage oppoſition to *good* government, are things highly criminal; and whoever does thus, whatever character he may wear among men, is in reality a miniſter, not of Chriſt, but of the devil, the father of falſhood, confuſion and rebellion. But to ſhew people their real danger, point out the ſource of it, and exhort them to ſuch exertions

† Pope.

ertions as are neceſſary to avoid it, are acts of benevolence becoming every diſciple, and eſpecially every profeſſed miniſter of Chriſt.

3. Since the preſervation of public liberty depends ſo much upon a people's being poſſeſſed of the art of war; thoſe who exert themſelves to encourage and promote this art, act a laudable part, and are intitled to the thanks of their brethren. Upon this account, the company, which is the occaſion of this ſolemnity, deſerves to be eſteemed *honorable*, though its inſtitution were much leſs *ancient* than it is. And as this ſociety has in former days furniſhed many brave men, who did worthily in defence of our country; ſo, from the ſpirit which at preſent prevails among the gentlemen who compoſe it, we doubt not but it will furniſh others, whenever there ſhall be occaſion for it. How far this inſtitution, by exciting in others a ſpirit of imitation or emulation, has been the occaſion of the preſent general attention to the military art among us, I pretend not to ſay: But whatever be the cauſe, it muſt give pleaſure to every friend of public liberty, to ſee this people ſo generally engaged in military exerciſes. This argues a manly ſpirit, a ſenſe of liberty, a juſt apprehenſion of its danger, a reſolution to ſtand faſt in it, and, as far as any thing in our power can do it, promiſes freedom to our country.

We are not, I hope, inſenſible that peace is a great bleſſing, and, in itſelf, ever to be prefered

to

to war; nor unthankful to Him who ruleth among the nations, the God of peace, for the enjoyment we have had of this bleſſing for a number of years paſt. But we have little reaſon to expect, however ardently we may wiſh, that this country will always be the habitation of peace. Ambition, avarice, and other unruly paſſions have a great hand in directing the conduct of moſt of the kingdoms of this world. Britiſh America is already become conſiderable among the European nations for its numbers, and their eaſineſs of living; and is continually riſing into greater importance. I will not undertake to decypher the *ſigns of the times*, or to ſay from what quarter we are moſt likely to be moleſted. But from the courſe of human affairs, we have the utmoſt reaſon to expect that the time will come, when we muſt either ſubmit to *ſlavery*, or defend our liberties by our own ſword. And this perhaps may be the caſe ſooner than ſome imagine. No one can doubt but there are powers on the continent of Europe, that would be glad to add North-America to their dominions, and who, if they thought the thing practicable, would ſoon find a pretence for attempting it. The naval power of Great-Britain has been hitherto our chief ſecurity againſt invaſions from that continent. But every thing belonging to the preſent ſtate, is uncertain and fluctuating. Things may ſoon be in ſuch a ſituation with Great-Britian, that it will be no longer proper for us to confide in her power, for the protection of our liberty. Our greateſt ſecurity, under God, will be our being in a capacity to defend ourſelves. Were we, indeed,

indeed, ſure that Great-Britain would always be both *able* and *willing* to protect us in our liberty, which, from preſent appearances, we have little reaſon to expect, it would be ſhameful for ſo numerous a people as this, and a people of ſo much natural ſtrength and fortitude, to be, thro' inattention to the art of war, incapable of bearing a part in their own defence. Such weakneſs muſt render them contemptible to all the world.

British America, eſpecially the nothern part of it, is by its ſituation calculated to be a nurſery of heroes. Nothing is wanting but our own care and application to make us, with the neighbouring colonies, a formidable people. And religion, honor, patriotiſm, and even ſelf-love, all unite in demanding from us this application and care. This people, it may be preſumed, will never of choice, keep among them a *ſtanding army* in time of peace: Virtue, domeſtic peace, the inſulted walls of our State-Houſe, and even the once crimſoned *ſtones of the ſtreet*, all loudly *cry out* againſt this meaſure. But every well-wiſher to the public, ſhould countenance and encourage a military ſpirit among our militia through the province.

Our political Fathers have it in their power to do much for this end; and we have a right to expect that, out of faithfulneſs to God and this people, they will not neglect it. From the countenance which his Excellency and the honorable Council ſhew to the military tranſactions of this day,

day, we would gladly hope, that, they in conjunction with the other branch of the legiſlature, will, in this way, as well as others, prove themſelves to be God's miniſters for good to the people.

It is alſo in the power of perſons of rank and fortune, in their private capacity, greatly to promote this cauſe by their example and otherwiſe. It is highly abſurd, though not uncommon, that thoſe who have moſt to loſe by the deſtruction of a ſtate, ſhould be leaſt capable of bearing a part in its defence. Riches are frequently the main temptation to war. Where a people are all poor, there is little danger of their being invaded: So that there being men of affluence among a people, is often the cauſe of their being obliged to defend themſelves by the ſword. It is thereſore eſpecially *their* duty, as well as intereſt, to do what they can to put the people into a capacity of defence. When *they* ſpend their time in idleneſs, effeminating pleaſures, or even in accumulating riches, to the total neglect of the art of war, and every meaſure to promote it, they act unbecoming good members of ſociety, and ſet an example highly prejudicial to the community.

Whereas when gentlemen of fortune, notwithſtanding the allurements of pleaſure on the one hand, and the fatiguing exerciſe of a ſoldier on the other, exert themſelves to acquire and promote the military art, they are an honor to their circumſtances, and a bleſſing to the public: Their

Their example will have great influence upon others; and, other things being equal, ſuch men will be moſt likely to fight valiantly in defence of their liberty, whenever it ſhall be neceſſary. By ſuch a conduct, they ſhew their regard to their country, in a way that will probably be much more beneficial to it, than merely talking, writing, or preaching in favor of liberty. And it ought to be eſteemed as no inconſiderable evidence, among many others, of a public, truly patriotic ſpirit in the honorable gentleman, ¶ who leads his Excellency's company of Cadets, that he has ſo chearfully endured the fatigue of qualifying himſelf to be a good officer, and, by his generous exertions in conjunction with their own, rendered his company an honour to the town, to their commanders and themſelves. This company in general, is indeed an example of what I was urging; of gentlemen of eaſy circumſtances giving proper attention to the art of war, and is on that account the more reſpectable and important.

But we have other laudable examples of attention to arms. The Train of Artillery † has for a number of years paſt been honorably diſtinguiſhed, by their military addreſs. And the reſpectable appearance which the whole militia of the town made a few days ago, when called together in honor of his Majeſty's birth-day, and the dexterity with which they went through their exerciſes, muſt convince all who had the

¶ The Hon. John Hancock, Eſq;

† A Company commanded by Major Paddock.

ſatisfaction of ſeeing them, that they are no ſtrangers to a military ſpirit, and lead us to hope that by perſeverance, the whole body will ſoon equal thoſe, who at preſent excel moſt. May this ſpirit ſtill revive and prevail through the province, till this whole people become as conſiderable for their ſkill in arms, as they are for their natural ſtrength and courage.

THE gentlemen who are engaged in acquiring this art will remember that the true end of it is only defence; that it is to be employed, not to deſtroy, but to protect and ſecure the liberty and happineſs of mankind; not to infringe the rights of others, but to defend their own. While, therefore, they endeavor to reſemble ſuch men as *Alexander* and *Cæſar* in military ſkill and valour, they will deteſt the principles from which they acted, in invading and diſtreſſing inoffenſive people. For though they have been honored with the name of heroes, they were, in reality, public robbers and murderers.

THEY will alſo remember that the moſt deſirable liberty, and which we ſhould be ready to defend, is that of a well governed ſociety, which is as eſſentially different from that licentiouſneſs, which is without law or government, as it is from an abſolute ſubjection to the arbitrary will of another. This is the liberty wherewith Chriſt has made us free; to which he has given us a right. While, therefore, theſe gentlemen will be always ready to ſtand forth in defence of true civil liberty, whenever they ſhall ſee her aſſaulted, and be properly called upon; they will never on any conſideration be prevailed

with, to employ their arms for the deſtruction of good government, by aiding either tyranny on the one hand, or licentiouſneſs on the other.

But above all they will remember, that religion is the main concern of man, and a neceſſary qualification for a good ſoldier. This, beyond any thing elſe, inſpires with the love of liberty, with fortitude and magnanimity; and this alone can enable them to meet death with a rational compoſure and tranquility of mind, which is an enemy before which the braveſt ſoldier muſt fall at laſt.

To conclude: This whole aſſembly will bear in mind, that there is another and more valuable kind of liberty, than that to which the foregoing diſcourſe more immediately relates, and which, at this day, ſo generally employs our attention and converſation; a liberty, which conſiſts in being free from the power and dominion of ſin, through the aſſiſtance of the divine ſpirit, concurring with our own pious, rational and perſevering endeavours. Whatever our outward circumſtances may be, if we are deſtitute of this ſpiritual liberty, we are in reality ſlaves, how much ſoever we may hate the name; if we poſſeſs it we are *free indeed*: And our being free in this ſenſe, will give us the beſt grounds to hope for temporal freedom, through the favour of heaven; and, at length, gain us admiſſion into the regions of perfect and uninterrupted liberty, peace and happineſs.

ERRATA. P. 15. l. 3 from bot. r. came. P. 17. l. 5. r. church P. 19. l. 5. r. precept. l. 8 from bot. r. enjoins.

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